

Michigan NETStalk

Michigan Network of Employers For Traffic Safety

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State Unveils Repeat Offender Program for Michigan Businesses and their Employees:

Serious consequences await repeat offenders (free employer kit available)

"I just received my Repeat Offender kit and wanted to let you know my opinion of the information. This package is extremely well put together and contains a great deal of useful information. I especially like the fact that you have put this information on various media (print, video, computer CD, PowerPoint), including different sizes of artwork to facilitate ease of use. The artwork prints out beautifully! I can certainly find many ways to use this kit. You perform a valuable service that is greatly appreciated!"

Sheree D. Russ, Safety Coordinator
Genesee County Road Commission

Michigan businesses won't want to miss out on an opportunity to educate themselves and their employees about Michigan's new repeat offender laws. This specially designed kit is **free**. The Michigan Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) has developed this new employer-based education program entitled, "The Laws Have Changed" to help employers and employees understand the state's tough, new repeat offender laws.

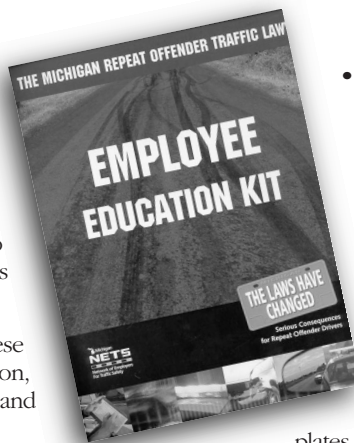
The repeat offender laws are designed to separate these motorists from vehicles through license plate confiscation, mandatory vehicle immobilization, ignition interlock and possible vehicle forfeiture.

Businesses could be dramatically affected if employees are driving company-owned vehicles at the time of arrest or have their driver license suspended or revoked. The impact on employees could also be detrimental if they are unable to drive to or from or in the course of their jobs.

The law defines repeat offenders as drivers with two or more alcohol-related driving convictions, or three or more additional suspensions for driving on a suspended or revoked drivers license.

The campaign kit, which is available to Michigan businesses **free of charge**, includes:

- Instructional video and a CD-ROM that outline the new laws
- Posters
- Sample check stuffers
- PowerPoint presentation that can be used in a classroom instructional setting



- Web pages that can be posted to your businesses intranet.

Other information highlights the Secretary of State's driving record subscription service. By subscribing, employers—whose employees drive company vehicles as part of their jobs—can be alerted to convictions for traffic violations by people working for them.

"The repeat offender laws are having a tremendous impact on identifying repeat offenders and getting them off the road," said Governor John Engler, the Michigan representative on the national NETS board. "In 13 months more than 19,543 license plates have been confiscated and another 4,981 vehicles have been immobilized, which demonstrates the magnitude of the risk repeat offenders create for law abiding citizens traveling our roadways."

The employer-based program, follows a successful "Give 'em the Boot" public information campaign developed by Secretary of State Candice S. Miller, which included in-person training for more than 5,000 law enforcement officers, court staff and prosecutors about the law. Printed training materials were mailed to hundreds of partners in the criminal justice system.

Both Governor Engler and Secretary Miller actively championed the passage of the repeat offender laws, which took effect October 1, 1999.

Last month Michigan NETS members were mailed an informational brochure describing this new Repeat Offender Employer Education program. To receive a free educational kit, go to the www.michnets.org website and click the laws have changed icon

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Legislative Status

Public Act 306 of 2000 took immediate effect on October 16, 2000, to reduce the time before an abandoned motor vehicle must be removed from a state trunk line highway. The law reduces the amount of time from 48 hours to 24 hours after a notice has been affixed to the vehicle.

New Safety Video is available



The Michigan Center for Truck Safety's new video and handbook, "Sharing the Road: Driving Safely Around Trucks," is now available for distribution. The Center is most interested in reaching organizations that would have a public, "non-truck driving" audience. The tips are intended to help automobile drivers understand the needs of commercial drivers for right and left turns, merging and exiting, and when a car is driving in a truck's blind spots. For more information about this program, please call (800) 682-4682, ext.11.

Fatigued Drivers



A study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that people who drive from midnight to 6 am, work two jobs and/or night shifts, or sleep less than six hours a night are most likely to have a drowsy driving crash. Many of the drivers who crashed after falling asleep at the wheel didn't feel tired before their crashes.

The "Circadian Rhythm"—Humans are evolved to be "diurnal" creatures, as opposed to nocturnal, that is we are hard-wired to operate optimally in the daytime; sleeping at night.

As newborns, we are essentially neither diurnal or nocturnal, having sleep-wake cycles which are frequent and evenly spaced during any 24-hour period; sleeping for 3–4 hours, waking for 1–2 hours, around the clock.

During the first year, this pattern progresses toward consolidation of the sleep period, trending toward increased nocturnal sleep and daytime wakefulness. At one year the infant typically sleeps about 10 hours from around 7 pm until about 5 am, with a couple of naps in the early and late afternoon, respectively.

By age 4–5, the child has lengthened the nocturnal period to about 11–12 hours (7 pm 'til 6 or 7 am) with one nap in the afternoon.

At age 10, times of sleep onset is somewhat delayed to 8 or 9 PM, and sleep lasts until 6 or 7 am, the nap disappearing.

Adults function optimally if sleep time is initiated regularly at about 10 pm and lasts until about 6 am, a period of transient sleepiness occurring normally at 1 or 2 pm. (Source—Sleepnet.com)

The study also found:

- Drivers in sleep-related crashes drove three or more hours at a time more often than other drivers.
- Drivers in sleep-related crashes were 40% more likely to crash if they worked more than 60 hours a week.
- Drivers in sleep-related crashes had tried to use strategies such as keeping the window open, turning up the radio volume, singing out loud, turning on the air-conditioner, or increasing their intake of caffeine.

According to the National Sleep Foundation:

- There is no substitute for a good night's sleep. Generally, the average adult requires about 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep to be effective. However, 8 hours is only the benchmark and does not take into account the state of general health of the individual, the level of stress he/she may be under, or the fatigue the individual may be under due to prolonged exertion which may require the individual to need more sleep.
- Drivers planning to take long trips should take a companion. That way the driving responsibilities can be shared. However, it is necessary for the person that is not driving to be able to get some sleep. If the person that is not driving remains awake, he/she is no better off in terms of rest as they will have had the same amount of "windshield time" as the driver.
- When taking a long trip be sure to schedule regular stops every 100 miles or 2 hours. When stopping be sure to get out, stretch and move about as to increase the blood flow throughout the body.
- Avoid alcohol and medications that may impair driving performance or that may decrease judgement.

Employee education kit *continued*

and follow the online instructions. Once at the NETS website, take a sneak preview of what the program offers. Requests can be faxed to the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 882-7778. Please include your name, title, company name, mailing address, number of employees in your organization who are employed in Michigan, and if you have a fleet, number of fleet vehicles, phone # and e-mail address.

These new laws and the accompanying educational campaign are designed to benefit employers, employees, and everyone travelling Michigan's roads. Remember that the laws have changed to better protect our loved ones and create serious consequences for repeat offenders who choose to ignore them.



If you have any questions, feel free to contact Michigan NETS Coordinator, Dan Vartanian at the Office of Highway Safety Planning by calling (517) 333-5322 or e-mail vartanid@state.mi.us.

Rage-Free Roads Begin with Person in the

MIRROR

So, here I am in traffic school—again—listening to a lecture on road rage, when it dawns on me: I drive fast even when I'm not late; plus, I have very little patience with elderly drivers, or anybody else who moves too slowly.

Cut in front of me, and I'm liable to retaliate by tailgating.

In other words, I am a jerk.

I see my car as a horse-powered extension of my personality. I may have little, if any, control over the people in my life. But when I press on that accelerator, my car obeys completely. I can steer a thousand pounds with my pinkie, and at the speed I choose.

Thankfully, a traffic cop tagged me before I tagged you.

Most traffic school courses consist of revisiting the official "rules of the road." But the driver improvement class that I'm talking about is less about obeying the law than prolonging life, with emphasis on driving techniques that would help make the roads safer.

Did you know that one way to reduce road rage is to drive a clean car with air conditioning and soothing music? Just wipe off the bird droppings and road silt, and clean out the candy wrappers and coffee cups.

Freshen up the air, too, but not by hanging anything from the rearview mirror. That would constitute an obstruction, and you could be ticketed in most states.

Now repeat after me: Life is too short to die from a stress-related heart attack (to say nothing of being attacked by another motorist with a tire iron).

Did you know that it takes more concentration to engage in a telephone conversation than it does to talk in person? That's why car phones are as likely to cause car wrecks as drunk drivers, according to the New England Journal of Medicine.

I did not know that people who hold steering wheels incorrectly can suffer broken wrists if the air bag deploys. You can also suffer face and neck injuries from sitting too close to the steering wheel. Use a seat belt. That safety bag inflates with nitrous oxide at about 200 miles per hour.

And to think that some of us drive with book racks and CD players laid across our steering wheels. (A book on tape would be better than a book rack embedded in your skull.)

Driving is the riskiest task that most of us are likely to perform on any given day. And it takes about five years for a new driver to develop the reflexes and accident prevention skills of the "average" driver. Unfortunately, that's too long for many of our youths.

One in five teenage drivers has an accident in the first year, accord-



ing to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and more than a third of the new drivers say they never saw it coming.

In Virginia last year, 167 drivers between the ages of 15 and 20 were killed in car accidents, up from 110 in 1999.

Several pieces of legislation are pending in that state to increase the age of first-time drivers and to extend the duration of their learner's permits.

Meanwhile, more experienced drivers could set a better example.

More than half of all accidents involve a single car—like the one Saturday on the Capital Beltway near Connecticut Avenue. A sport-utility vehicle rolled over and crashed with six teenagers and young adults inside.

Five were ejected onto the road—a red flag about their use of seat belts. Fortunately, other drivers were not using cell phones or otherwise distracted and did not run over them.

The 17-year-old driver was given a blood alcohol test, but the results were not immediately released. Nevertheless, driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs remains a big problem, especially for teenagers.

As for me, an attitude adjustment is underway. Enough with self-centered belief systems. That traffic jam didn't materialize just to deter me. And that person who cut me off could have been a parent who just got word that a child had been in an accident.

As for those elderly drivers, why not give them the same consideration that I'd like to receive in my senior years?

Just pausing to take a deep breath can have amazing results. The more courtesy I show to other drivers, as it turns out, the more courtesy they show me. The less I act like a jerk on the road, the fewer jerks I see.

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ROAD-WISE



NETS
Network Of Employees
For Traffic Safety

COURTESY. PATIENCE. GOOD JUDGEMENT. TAKE YOUR JOB SKILLS ON THE ROAD.





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Department of State Police
Office of Highway Safety Planning
4000 Collins Road
P.O. Box 30633
Lansing, MI 48909



CLICK IT...or TICKET... "A Law You Can Live With"

New Parking Lot Signs Available Free for a Limited Time

In March 2000, Michigan's new safety belt law changed to permit police to stop and ticket drivers who fail to buckle up (Public Act 29 of 1999). As Colonel Michael D. Robinson, Director of the Department of State Police, said "The goal is to save lives and prevent serious injuries, not write tickets."

To assist businesses in promoting the new seat belt law and to increase belt use within your organization, a small grant within OHSP has made it possible to produce metal parking lot signs, like the one above. The signs are 24" x 24" and have been manufactured to withstand years of Michigan



weather. Hardware for mounting the signs will not be included. A limited number of signs will be made available to our NETS partners. If you are interested in obtaining a sign, please e-mail the Michigan Resource Center at info@wearemr.org or fax your request to (517) 882-7778. Please indicate that you are a Michigan NETS member and wish to obtain the new "Click It or Ticket" metal parking lot sign. Because of the quantity of signs we have on hand each NETS member is limited to a maximum of two (2) signs. Be sure to include name, business name and full street address, no PO boxes please, when ordering the signs.

6th Annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit—May 15–16, 2001

The 6th Annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit will be held May 15–16, 2001, at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids. The Traffic Safety Summit is sponsored by the Michigan Traffic Safety Management Steering Committee, the Michigan State Safety Commission, the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning and the Michigan Department of Transportation. Traffic safety advocates throughout the state will be gathering at this central location. Traffic safety partners will discuss current trends in law enforcement, legislation, roadway engineering, vehicle design, and driver attitudes. The 6th Annual Summit will be a reflection of new and emerging issues as well as innovative ways to increase safety belt use and address the impaired driving problem.

If you are interested in attending or would like to exhibit, sponsor, or advertise in the Summit program, please contact: Sandy Brown at the Office of Highway Safety Planning by calling (517) 333-5301. You may also log onto OHSP's website (www.ohsp.state.mi.us) and register on line. Just click the "Traffic Safety Summit" information icon and obtain all the information you need to register as an attendee or exhibitor.

